Mental Ability-1930

INTELLIGENCE TESTS CALLED A 'CRIME'

J. E. Morgan, Editor, Declares Thinkers Like Lincoln Would Get Low Rating.

New York Times

SEES ABILITIES IGNORED

4-22-30

Holds Their Effect Is Vicious in Discouraging Those in Need of Most Encouragement.

New York N.Y.

The intelligence test is one of the greatest crimes that was ever foisted on the public in the name of education, according to Joy Elmer Morgan, editor of The National Educational Association Journal, just before he left New York yesterday for Washington, D. C.

"It is not an intelligence test at all," Mr. Morgan said, "because it does not measure intelligence. Lincoln and many other great thinkers of the past would have been rated very low by such a test because they were deliberate thinkers.

"What these tests do measure is a person's ability in a particular, narrow field at a particular time. They do not measure intelligence because they do not make allowances for the constant changes in a person's background, intensity of purpose, thoroughness and rate of thinking. All of these are essential factors in the make-up of a person's intelligence," he pointed out.

The discouragement of such a rating would have diverted these leaders into other fields and seriously impeded America's progress, Mr. Morgan said in explaining the pernicious effect of using intelligence tests.

Binet Test Assailed.

The fallacy of using the Binet-Simon tests in rating the American soldiers during the World War was also scored by him. On the basis of these tests the average soldier was rated as possessing an intelligence of a 12-year-old child.

"This is obviously ridiculous," Mr. Morgan said. "Especially does it become foolish when we remember that educators are fairly well agreed on the point that the human mind matures at the age of twelve."

The vicious effect of these tests in the educational program of our schools and colleges today lies in the fact that they have discouraged those who have needed the encouragement most and made "smart alecks" out of those who most needed to face difficult tasks. The deliberateness, thoroughness and the abilities to analyze and think reflectively do, after all, form the basis of greatness, according to Mr. Morgan.

"Democracy of educational opportunities," Mr. Morgan continued, "is now an established educational principle. Horace Mann, 100 years ago, began the first great American campaign in establishing good common schools for the masses. Immediately the common people did learn and rose to the opportunity. Educators in 1850 said that women couldn't profit from education. In fact, when the National Education Association was organized in Philadelphia in 1857 women were not allowed to belong to it. It was an organization of "gentlemen only." Education for women at that time was believed futile.

Intelligent Women Praised.

"As soon as the opportunities for education presented themselves the women rose quickly to them. Today we have the most intelligent motherhood the world has ever known as a result.

"As late as the '90s the educators, by the same process of reasoning that is implied in the practical application of the so-called intelligence tests, believed that the masses were unable to profit by a high school education. But we've given them high schools. Today there are 5,000,000 high school students in this country. This has resulted in our country having a productive and consuming power greater than that of the entire world put together.

"Since the Spanish-American War we have risen from a place of comparative obscurity to that of the greatest of world powers. The schools and the high schools of this counrty are directly responsible for this growth. They have trained young persons to do a better and more intelligent job. They have trained them to save time by giving them an ease of adaptability in these times of swiftly changing economic shifts.

"Thus the set-up of so mechanical and limited a test as the 'intelligence' test as a standard of gauging the intellectual and educational possibilities of the young people ignores the immense reservoir of untouched abilities that are latent in the great masses of normal peopie," Mr. Morgan said.

Teachers Called Guides.

"The business of the teacher is to guide and not to limit the opportunities," said Mr. Morgan. "Such tests might have a practical value in the school room if they were devised so that they could help the teacher to understand the educational needs of the youngsters. But even in such cases they would still not be intelligence tests."

Mr. Morgan, censuring colleges for using the tests as a basis for limiting college entrants, said: "The business of the college is to prepare the masses for a higher level of mental, social and civic life. It is not the business of the college to establish an intellectual autocracy. The persons who need college the most are the ones who find it most difficult to adapt themselves and make progress. They are the very ones who are shut out of college by the tests.

"Instead of limiting educational opportunities by using these viciously false standards, we ought to force the 1,000,000 children who are being exploited as child labor into the schools," Mr. Morgan said. "By filling their places from the breadlines, we would go a long way in solving our unemployment problem."

ASST. SUPT. H. H. LONG TALKED AT YALE

Psychologists Given Results of Mental Tests of D.C. Children.

CULTURE BIG ITEM

Colored Children with Background Test High as Others.

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Howard H. Long, member of the Teachers' College class of 1915, now assistant superintendent of public schools of the District of Columbia, in charge of research in division 10 to 13, recently delivered an address at Yale university on testing of colored children in the public schools in Washington.

The occasion was the International Conference of Psychologists with twenty-seven countries represented. The evidence presented by Mr. Long was a startling contradiction of that taken from other sections of the country where the I Q of colored children was shown to be very much lower. The reasons for this fact, as presented by Mr. Long, was that Negro children are isolated both socially and economically without exposure to such cultural influences as enjoyed by children of other races. This was proved by the high I Q of the Washington test where the cultural environment of the children was taken into consideration. Mr. Long concluded with a proposition that Negro children under like cultural conditions will test as high as children of any other race.

TESTS SHOW NEGRO YOUTH LEARNS FASTER THAN WHITE

Tennessee News

10-26-30

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—An examination of 500 12-year old white children, and 500 12-year old colored children in three typical American communities, Nashville Chicago, and New York, revealed recently that the Negro children were able to learn to associate numbers with letters faster than the white children.

Knoxville Tennessee

Prof. Lyle H. Lanier of Vanderbilt university, Nashville tried out the experiment to determine the qualities of aptitude in boys and girls of both groups. Full information of the project will be published in a forth-coming issue of Comparative Psychology.